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(54) Title: INHIBITOR OF OSTEOCLAST PRECURSOR FORMATION

(57) Abstract: This invention relates to a polypeptide factor which is able to inhibit the formation of osteoclasts. In particular, the invention relates to a factor which inhibits the differentiation of haematopoietic precursor cells into mononucleate osteoclast precursors. In a preferred form of the invention, the factor is a type (II) membrane polypeptide expressed on the osteoblast cell surface, which we have designated osteoclast inhibitory lectin (OCIL). Nucleic acids encoding the polypeptide factor, polypeptides, and antibodies to the polypeptide are disclosed and claimed. The factor is useful in the treatment of conditions associated with abnormalities of bone resorption.

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